THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir, a few cases have been delayed due to non-completion of formalities by the subscriber *viz.* payment of final telephone bill, surrender of telephone instruments and directory etc.

(c) Field units have already been instructed to settle the refund cases within one month and without waiting for normal formalities. Surrender of Telephone instrument and Directory has also been waived off, if the telephone has worked for more than 3 years.

Consumer Courts functioning in Andhra Pradesh

185. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of consumer courts presently functioning in Andhra Pradesh, district-wise;

(b) the number of cases filed in these courts in the State during the last three years, year-wise and how many of them were decided during the said period and the reasons for pending of others; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to strengthen infrastructure of the consumer courts in the State ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) Besides one State Commission for the State of Andhra Pradesh, 25 District Forums are functioning in the 23 districts of Andhra Pradesh. The districts of Hyderabad and Krishna have two District Forums each and all other districts have one District Forum each.

(b) Year-wise information is not maintained. However, as reported by the State Commission of Andhra Pradesh, 145782 cases have been filed since inception in the State Commission and District Forums in the State of Andhra Pradesh, out of which 128630 cases have been decided and 17152 cases are pending for disposal. The disposal is 88.23%.

(c) To supplement the efforts of the State Government to strengthen the infrastructure of the State Commission and District Forums, a One-Time Grant of Rs. 270 lakhs was provided by the Central Government to the State of Andhra Pradesh during the year 1995—97.

Road Transportation Charges

186. DR. A.K. PATEL : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat has represented to the Central Government for allowing actual road transportation charges in respect of lifting of levy sugar under sugar price equalization fund;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering the proposal; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government of Gujarat represented to the Central Government regarding reimbursement of actual road transportation charges. The State Government has been informed, *inter-alia*, that Central Government has revised the margin guidelines on 4-11-1996 and, as per these guidelines, the transportation charges with effect from 1-4-1996 are being reimbursed at a flat rate for each State to be fixed on the basis of audited figures of expenditure duly approved by the State Government concerned incurred for the previous year.

Allocation of free rice to Andhra Pradesh

187. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether allocation of free of cost rice was made by Government to Andhra Pradesh under Food for Work Programme to contain prevailing drought conditions in the State during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;